



Dr. John P. O'Keefe

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Putting on a New Face

Do appearances matter? Are looks just skin deep or does the surface give a good indication of the substance of a person (or an organization, for that matter)? Those who conceived the American television reality shows, in which participants undergo an extreme cosmetic surgery make-over that often includes a dental component, certainly bank on the idea that appearance is crucial to an individual's self-worth.

I am probably the last person who should comment on the merits of such programs, given that I have never watched them. However, I have heard a number of dentist colleagues discussing their potential impact on our profession. Opinions seem to be polarized. Some say these programs have a positive impact because they raise public awareness of the exciting possibilities offered by cosmetic dentistry. Others worry that such shows cheapen and make a commodity out of health services, portraying health care practitioners as salespeople.

While the truth probably lies somewhere in between, the shows' creators are surely happy that people are watching and discussing their offerings. It reminds me of the old maxim in publishing that “it is more important to be read than to convey the truth.” Of course, with *JCDA* we try to tell the truth (as best we know it) while being read by as many dentists as possible. I am certainly conscious that the appearance of a publication makes a difference to a busy practitioner who is trying to decide whether to read a journal after an exhausting day of clinical work.

Readers have been telling me that it is time to make adjustments to the appearance of *JCDA* — to make it more esthetically pleasing, while not diminishing the credibility of its content, which is both pertinent and essential to Canadian dentists. I agree that it is time for a change. Starting with this edition, we are putting a new

face on the publication, in more ways than one. Besides incorporating many new design elements, we are also experimenting with a new cover concept.

With the idea of celebrating the people who contribute to the advancement of our profession, I am inviting individuals to consider having their image on the front cover. These individuals will be linked in some way to the content of that particular issue: either as an author of an article or as the subject of an interview, a news story or a feature article. I believe it is important to celebrate the voluntary efforts made by so many of our colleagues, from which we all benefit. Very often, those who contribute most to the profession are those least likely to seek public recognition or engage in self-promotion.

Conscious of this fact, I have invited Dr. David Kennedy of Vancouver, the author of 2 clinical articles in this issue, to grace this month's cover. He has contributed greatly to the profession in a voluntary capacity for many years. He first came to my attention as the author of one of our pediatric dentistry textbooks when I was a dental student. Since that time, he has broadened his professional horizons to include specialist orthodontic practice. I hope you enjoy his articles on the management of unilateral posterior crossbite — a topic that should be pertinent to all general practice dentists.

The redesign of *JCDA* is another step in our new publication strategy, one that provides first-class information services to our readership and CDA members in particular. I envision the paper journal as essential reading for the Canadian dentist who wishes to remain connected to developments relevant to his or her professional life. The electronic version of *JCDA* will develop into a more global and scholarly publication. This autumn will also see the launch of a new-look CDA Web site, with particular emphasis on services available exclusively to our members.

While our publications are not undergoing an extreme make-over, their new face is symbolic of an evolving organization — one that is particularly sensitive to the needs of its members. These changes are not merely skin deep. *JCDA* acts as our organization's face to the world: a face that is open and welcoming, with 2 ears and one mouth. We will listen carefully to your feedback.

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